Having thus described the preferred embodiments, the invention is now claimed to be:

1. A user interface method for executing one or more operations in a computer for interfacing an associated user with a knowledge portal that is operatively associated with a plurality of data objects, the user interface method comprising the steps of:

receiving a user input;

updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter;

updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter;

displaying in a document pane at least a portion of the current object;

displaying in a map pane the K-map; and

displaying in a preview pane contents associated with the preview object.

2. The user interface method as set forth in claim **1**, wherein:

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-map view selector based upon the received user input; and

the step of displaying in a map pane the K-map includes selectively displaying one of a tree view and a node view of the K-map based upon the setting of the K-map view selector.

3. The user interface method as set forth in claim **1**, wherein:

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-map class selector value based upon the received user input; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects corresponding to the K-map class selector value.

4. The user interface method as set forth in claim **3**, wherein:

the step of updating a K-map class selector value includes updating the K-map selector value to correspond to one of a people class, a places class, and a things class based upon the received user input.

5. The user interface method as set forth in claim **1**, wherein:

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-map scope based upon the received user input; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects within the K-map scope.

6. The user interface method as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a selection of the current object identity from the user through the K-map pane; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects related to the current object.

7. The user interface method as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a selection of the preview object identity from the user through the K-map pane.

8. The user interface method as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a text entry through user highlighting of text in the document display pane;

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating an object K-map parameter to correspond with the received text entry; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects related to the selected text.

9. The user interface method as set forth in claim 1, further including:

simultaneously displaying the document pane, the map pane, and the preview pane on a single display device.

10. An apparatus for executing one or more operations in a computer for interfacing an associated user with a knowledge portal operatively associated with a plurality of data objects, the apparatus comprising:

a computer having a data store coupled thereto, wherein the data store stores the plurality of data objects; and

one or more computer programs, performed by the computer for:

receiving a user input,

updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter,

updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter,

displaying in a document pane at least a portion of the current object,

displaying in a map pane the K-map, and

displaying in a preview pane contents associated with the preview object.

11. The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, wherein:

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-map view selector based upon the received user input; and

the step of displaying in a map pane the K-map includes selectively displaying one of a tree view and a node view of the K-map based upon the setting of the K-map view selector.

12. The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, wherein:

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-map class selector value based upon the received user input; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects corresponding to the K-map class selector value.

13. The apparatus as set forth in claim **12**, wherein:

the step of updating a K-map class selector value includes updating the K-map selector value to correspond to one of a people class, a places class, and a things class based upon the received user input.

14. The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, wherein:

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-map scope based upon the received user input; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects within the K-map scope.

15. The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, wherein:

the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a selection of the current object identity from the user through the K-map pane; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects related to the current object.

16. The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, wherein:

the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a selection of the preview object identity from the user through the K-map pane.

17. The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, wherein:

the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a text entry supplied through user highlighting of text in the document display pane;

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating an object K-map parameter to correspond with the received text entry; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects related to the selected text.

18. The apparatus as set forth in claim **10**, further including:

simultaneously displaying the document pane, the map pane, and the preview pane on a single display device.

19. An article of manufacture comprising a program storage medium readable by a computer and embodying one or more instructions executable by the computer to perform method steps for executing an operation to perform a user interface method for

interfacing an associated user with a knowledge portal operatively associated with a plurality of data objects, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a user input;

updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter;

updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter;

displaying in a document pane at least a portion of the current object;

displaying in a map pane the K-map; and

displaying in a preview pane contents associated with the preview object.

20. The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **19**, wherein:

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-map view selector based upon the received user input; and

the step of displaying in a map pane the K-map includes selectively displaying one of a tree view and a node view of the K-map based upon the setting of the K-map view selector.

21. The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **19**, wherein:

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-map class selector value based upon the received user input; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects corresponding to the K-map class selector value.

22. The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **21**, wherein:

the step of updating a K-map class selector value includes updating the K-map selector value to correspond to one of a people class, a places class, and a things class based upon the received user input.

23. The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **19**, wherein:

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating a K-map scope based upon the received user input; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects within the K-map scope.

24. The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **19**, wherein:

the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a selection of the current object identity from the user through the K-map pane; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects related to the current object.

25. The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **19**, wherein:

the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a selection of the preview object identity from the user through the K-map pane.

26. The article of manufacture as set forth in claim **19**, wherein:

the step of receiving a user input includes receiving a text entry supplied through user highlighting of text in the document display pane;

the step of updating, based upon the received user input, at least one of a current object identity, a preview object identity, and a K-map parameter includes updating an object K-map parameter to correspond with the received text entry; and

the step of updating a K-map conditional upon updating a K-map parameter includes updating the K-map to include objects related to the selected text.

27. The user interface method as set forth in claim **19**, further including:

simultaneously displaying the document pane, the map pane, and the preview pane on a single display device.

28. A user interface for interfacing an associated user with a knowledge portal that is operatively associated with a plurality of data objects, the user interface comprising:

a means for receiving a user input;

a K-map processor for calculating a K-map corresponding to a current object and a set of K-map parameters;

a current object display pane for displaying at least a portion of the current object;

a K-map display pane for displaying the K-map; and

a preview pane for displaying contents corresponding to a preview object.

29. The user interface as set forth in claim **28**, wherein:

the set of K-map parameters includes a view mode parameter;

the K-map display pane displays the K-map in a node view conditional upon the view mode parameter corresponding to a node view; and

the K-map display pane displays the K-map in a tree view conditional upon the view mode parameter corresponding to a tree view.

30. The user interface as set forth in claim **28**, wherein:

the set of K-map parameters includes a class parameter; and

the K-map processor calculates a K-map containing objects limited to objects corresponding to the class parameter.

31. The user interface as set forth in claim **30**, wherein:

the means for receiving a user input include a pointing device selection means operative at least within the K-map display pane; and

the class parameter is selectively updateable by the user via the pointing device selection means operating on a graphical class input dialog.

32. The user interface as set forth in claim **30**, wherein:

the class parameter selectively takes values including a people class value, a places class value, and a things class value.

33. The user interface as set forth in claim **28**, wherein:

the set of K-map parameters includes a scope parameter; and

the K-map processor calculates a K-map containing objects limited to objects whose relationship to the current object falls within the scope parameter value.

34. The user interface as set forth in claim **33**, wherein:

the means for receiving a user input include a pointing device selection means operative at least within the K-map display pane; and

the scope parameter is selectively updateable by the user via the pointing device selection means operating on a graphical scope input dialog.

35. The user interface as set forth in claim **34**, wherein the graphical scope input dialog is a slider bar.

36. The user interface as set forth in claim **28**, wherein:

the means for receiving a user input include a pointing device selection means operative at least within the K-map display pane; and

the current object is selectively updateable by the user via the pointing device selection means operating within the K-map display pane.

37. The user interface as set forth in claim **28**, wherein:

the means for receiving a user input include a pointing device selection means operative at least within the K-map display pane; and

the preview object is selectively updateable by the user via the pointing device selection means operating within the K-map display pane.

38. The user interface as set forth in claim **28**, wherein:

the set of K-map parameters includes an object parameter, said object parameter being selectively updateable by the user; and

the K-map processor calculates a K-map containing objects related to the object corresponding to the object parameter.

39. The user interface as set forth in claim **38**, wherein:

the means for receiving a user input include a pointing device selection means operative at least within the document display pane whereby the user selectively updates the object parameter by selecting text corresponding thereto from the contents of the document display pane.